# ELECTRONIC CASE FILING CM/ECF



# User's Manual

District of Kansas (Revised October 2008)

# **Electronic Case Files System User's Manual**

(Last revision: October 2008)

# **Getting Started**

#### Introduction

This manual provides instructions on how to use the Electronic Case Filing (ECF) system to e-file documents with the court, or to view and retrieve docket sheets and documents for all cases assigned to this system. Users should have a working knowledge of a web browser (Internet Explorer or Firefox) and Adobe Acrobat.

#### **Help Desk**

Contact the Clerk's Office between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 4:30 P. M., Monday through Friday, if you need assistance using ECF.

Kansas City: 913-735-2200

ksd clerks kansascity@ksd.uscourts.gov

Topeka: 785-338-5400

ksd clerks topeka@ksd.uscourts.gov

Wichita: 316-315-4200

ksd clerks wichita@ksd.uscourts.gov

OR

E-mail: ksd cmecf helpdesk@ksd.uscourts.gov

#### **ECF System Capabilities**

The electronic filing system allows registered participants to:

- Electronically file pleadings in criminal and civil cases
- View official docket sheets and documents associated with cases requires a PACER account.
- View various reports for cases

# Requirements

#### **Hardware and Software Requirements**

The hardware and software needed to electronically file, view and retrieve case documents are the following:

- A computer running Windows 2000 or higher or Macintosh running OS X 10.0 or higher
- Internet connectivity through an Internet provider (Broadband Cable, DSL, ISDN, T1)
- PDF software, such as Adobe Acrobat Writer or pdfFactory, to convert documents from a word processor format to portable document format (PDF).
- A scanner to convert documents that are not in a word processing format Note: Exhibits or photos would be some of the documents that cannot be produced electronically.

#### PACER Registration (Public Access to Court Electronic Records)

ECF users should have a PACER account with the court in order to use the Query and Report features of the ECF system. If you do not have a PACER login and password, contact the PACER Service Center to establish an account. You may call the PACER Service Center at (800) 676-6856 or (210) 301-6440 for information or to register for an account. Also, you may register for PACER online at http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov.

# **Registering for Access to ECF**

Participants will need to register with the court to receive a login and password for the CM/ECF system. Registration forms can be obtained on our web site at <a href="http://www.ksd.uscourts.gov">http://www.ksd.uscourts.gov</a>.

Completed registration forms can be submitted by mail, fax or e-mail.

Once an account has been established, your login and password will be sent to you by the Clerk's Office by regular, first-class mail.

Any one can practice e-filing using the training version of ECF on our Web page on the Internet at https://ecf-train.ksd.uscourts.gov. We strongly recommend that registered users practice in the "training" ECF database before e-filing documents in a case.

# **Preparation**

# **Setting Up the Acrobat PDF Reader**

Users should have the **free** Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view documents that have been electronically filed.

# **Portable Document Format (PDF)**

Only PDF (Portable Document Format) documents may be e-filed with the court using the ECF system. Users should preview the PDF formatted document to ensure that it appears in its entirety and in the proper format.

#### How to View a PDF Document

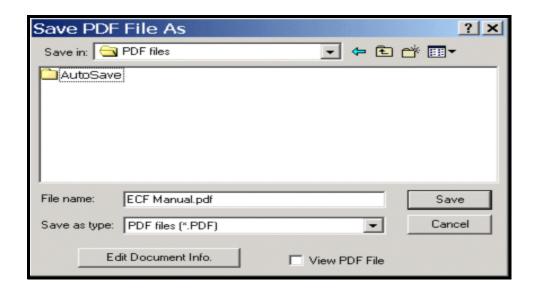
- Start the Adobe Acrobat program.
- Go to the *File* menu and choose *Open*.
- Click on the location in the "Look in" box and select the PDF document to be viewed.
- If the displayed document is larger than the screen or consists of multiple pages, use the scroll bars to move through the document.

### How to Convert (Print) Documents to PDF Format

You must convert (print) all of your documents to a PDF format before e-filing them in the court's Electronic Case Filing (ECF) system. The conversion process requires software installed on your computer, such as Adobe Acrobat **Writer**, FinePrint, or pdf995 (free).

#### Using any word processing program:

- Open the word processing document to be printed to PDF.
- Select the [Print] option (generally found under the File menu) and in the dialog box select the option to change the designation of the printed document to PDF option. A drop down menu with a list of printer choices is displayed.



- Select the PDF option available on your option list.
- "Print" the file. The document should not actually print out; instead the option to save the file as a PDF format document appears. To view the PDF document after printing make sure the "View PDF File" is marked.
- Make a note of the PDF document location, so you can find the PDF document when you are ready to upload it. Change the location if necessary by clicking in the "Save in" area of the window.
- Name the document, ensuring it has the .PDF extension and click on the [Save] button.

Depending on the word processing program being used, it may be necessary to find the printer selection option elsewhere. At that point, change the printer to Adobe PDF and follow the directions above.

<sup>\*</sup>You must have a PDF application installed on your computer to see the choices listed above.

# **Basics**

#### **User Interactions**

There are three general types of user interactions allowed by the system:

- Entering information in data fields
- Using command buttons
- Mouse-clicking on hyperlinks

#### **Conventions used in this Manual:**

- Data to be entered by the user is shown enclosed in angle brackets: <data to be entered>.
- Command buttons are represented in this manual in [bracketed boldface type].
- Hyperlinks are represented in **underlined boldface type**.

#### **Documents Filed In Error**

A pleading incorrectly e-filed in a case may result from attaching the wrong PDF document to a docket entry; selecting the wrong event type from the menu; or simply entering the wrong case number and not discovering the error before the transaction is completed.

The system will not permit you to make changes to a pleading or docket entry e-filed in error once the transaction has been submitted. Please notify the court if you e-file a pleading in error as soon as possible after an error is discovered. You will need to have the case number and pleading number available. If appropriate, the court will make an entry indicating that the pleading was e-filed in error. You will be advised if you need to re-file the pleading.

To request a correction, telephone the appropriate clerk's office:

Kansas City 913-735-2200 Topeka 785-338-5400 Wichita 316-315-4200

# **Viewing your Transaction Log**

Select this feature from the <u>Utilities</u> menu. You will be prompted to enter a start and end date for a report to be generated. The report will show all transactions that have been occurred under your login and password within the date range entered. If you believe or suspect someone is using your login and password without your permission, change your password immediately, then telephone the clerk's office as soon as possible.

#### **User's Manual**

Updates to the manual will be made periodically. To obtain the most recent version of the User's Manual for CM/ECF, visit <a href="www.ksd.uscourts.gov">www.ksd.uscourts.gov</a>—>CM/ECF—>Resources—>User's Guide.

# A Step-By-Step Guide

Below is a step-by-step guide for entering the system, preparing a document for e-filing, by e-filing a motion or application, and displaying a docket sheet. We suggest that you go through the steps on the training database before trying to actually e-file a document.

# **How to Access the System**

Users can access CM/ECF LIVE via the Internet by going to:

https://ecf.ksd.uscourts.gov/

Or, you may go to the District of Kansas's Web site at www.ksd.uscourts.gov and click on the CM/ECF hyperlink.

Click on CM/ECF link to open the LIVE login screen.



#### CM/ECF Operational Notices

No scheduled downtime

Welcome to the U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas

#### Click here to log into CM/ECF

#### CM/ECF Links:

- CM/ECF 3.2 Release Notes (rev. 12/07)
- Notice for Members of the Bar on Electronic Availability of Transcripts (rev. 1/08)
- Instructions for Filing Sealed Documents in Civil Cases (rev. 04/08)
- · Instructions for Filing Sealed Documents in Criminal Cases (rev. 3/08)
- Civil Administrative Procedures (rev. 06/08)
- Criminal Administrative Procedures (rev. 06/08)

#### District Court Links:

- · District of Kansas Web Site
- District of Kansas Forms

#### Other Court Links:

- The Federal Judiciary
- 10th Circuit
- · PACER Service Center

Click on the hyperlink "Click here to log into CM/ECF"

Users can access the court's **Training Database** by going to CM/ECF —> Training —> click on CM/ECF Training System.

# CM/ECF Training Information

The Clerk's Office provides a variety of options for initial and refresher training on the CM/ECF system.

#### CM/ECF ON-LINE TUTORIAL

This ONLINE TUTORIAL walks you through filing a variety of civil and criminal pleadings. Use this tutorial to learn to file electronically in CM/ECF or to brush up on your skills. Note: some screens may differ slightly from the District of Kansas live CM/ECF system, but the functionality of the software is the same as in the tutorial.

#### • CM/ECF Online Tutorial

#### CM/ECF TRAINING SYSTEM

The CM/ECF TRAINING SYSTEM is a training database that is very similar to the live CM/ECF system. Use the training area to practice your skills without the aid of prompts. Login and test cases are available on the main training system page.

# • CM/ECF Training System

Hands-on training classes are no longer scheduled by the District of Kansas. If the above training options do not fit your needs, please contact your local Clerk's Office.

# **LIVE Log in**

After clicking on "Click here to log into CM/ECF" the next screen is the login and password screen.

United States District of Kansas CM/ECF Filer or PACER Login
Notice This is a Restricted Web Site for Official Court Business only. Unauthorized entry is prohibited and subject to prosecution under Title 18 of the U.S. Code. All activities and access attempts are logged.
Instructions for filing: Enter your CM/ECF filer login and password if you are electronically filing something with the court.
If you received this login page as a result of a link from a Notice of Electronic Filing email:  Enter your CM/ECF filer login and password. The system prompts customers for a CM/ECF login and password when attempting to view certain types of documents.
If you have trouble viewing a document:  After successful entry of your CM/ECF login, you should be able to view the document. If you receive the message "You do not have permission to view this document," viewing the document is restricted to attorneys of record in the case and the system does not recognize you as such. If the login prompt appears again, after you have entered your CM/ECF login and password, it means that the "free look" link has expired. You will need to enter your PACER login and password to view the document, and you will be charged \$.08 per page.
Instructions for viewing filed documents and case information: If you do not need filing capabilities, enter your PACER login and password. If you do not have a PACER login, you may register online at <a href="http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov">http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov</a> .
Authentication
Login:  Password:  The transcript policy has been revised effective January 14, 2008.
client

Enter your *Kansas District Court* ECF Login and Password in the appropriate data entry fields. All ECF login names and passwords are case sensitive.

**Note:** Use your **Kansas ECF** login and password if you are e-filing a pleading or to maintain your account. If you want to query the database for case information or to view a document, you will be prompted to enter your **PACER** login and password.

Verify that you have entered your ECF login and password correctly. If not, click on the **[Clear]** button to erase the Login and Password entries and re-enter the correct information. After you enter the correct login and password information, click on the **[Login]** button to transmit your user information to the ECF system.

- If the ECF system does not recognize your login and password, it will display the following error message on a new screen.
  - Login failed either your login name or key is incorrect -
- Click on the [Back] button in your browser and re-enter your correct login and password.

Once the **Main Menu** appears, choose from a list of **hyperlinked** or **drop down** options on the menu bar.



# Selecting MENU OPTIONS ON THE "BLUE MENU" BAR



ECF provides the following features that are accessible from the Blue menu bar at the top of the opening screen.

<u>Civil</u>To see a menu of events that can be docketed to civil cases.

<u>Criminal</u>To see a menu of events that can be docketed to criminal cases.

**Query**- To find a case by case number, case characteristics, or name/type of a

participant, then see a menu of query options.

**Reports**- To see a menu of standard reports

<u>Utilities</u>- View your personal ECF transaction log and maintain personal ECF

account information in the **Utilities** area of ECF.

**Search** - This option can help you find and get to the menu option or docket event

that you need. Type in some letters of a word, and a complete list of menu items and events whose names contain those letters is displayed. Each of the displays is a link, so that all you have to do is click it -- if it's an event,

you go immediately to the first screen for docketing.

**Logout**- This step is important one to take when you are done using ECF. Always

logout upon completing your work.

### **Civil Events**

Registered filers will click on Civil to electronically e-file with the Court a variety of pleadings and other documents for civil cases. This section of the manual describes the basic steps that you need to take in order to e-file a single motion with the Court. The process is consistent regardless of the event.

#### **General Rules**

#### Screens -

Each screen has the following two buttons:

- Clear clears all characters entered in the box(es) on that screen.
- or Submit accepts the entry just made and displays the next entry screen, if any.

#### Correcting a mistake during e-filing:



You can use the button on the browser toolbar to go back and correct an entry made on a previous screen. However, once the document is transmitted to the court, only the court can make changes or corrections.

#### **Signatures**

All pleadings are required to have the correct format for the signature block of the filing party and signature. See example below.

s/Filing Party Name
Filing Party Name
Bar number (if filer is an attorney)
Party Representing (Plaintiff or Defendant)
Address
City, State, Zip
Phone number and fax number
E-mail address

Third Party Signatures - If the original document requires the signature of a third party, the filing party will scan the original document and e-file it. Such documents could be affidavits or unsworn declarations required by a rule or statute.

Refer to the Administrative Procedures for additional information.

# Filing a Civil Complaint

The Court will accept complaints and civil cover sheets sent by e-mail, submitted on CDs or flashdrives, sent by U. S. Mail, or delivered in person to the Clerk's office. All submissions except for paper must be in PDF format and sent to one of the following addresses:

ksd\_clerks\_kansascity@ksd.uscourts.gov ksd\_clerks\_topeka@ksd.uscourts.gov ksd\_clerks\_wichita@ksd.uscourts.gov

The filing fee, in the form of cash, check, money order or credit card, must accompany a complaint sent through the U.S. Mail or personally delivered to the Clerk's office. If sent by e-mail, the Clerk's office will contact the filing party for a credit card number to pay the filing fee.

# Filing pleadings in a Civil Cases

After successfully logging into ECF, follow these steps to e-file a pleading. Below are the steps involved in e-filing a pleading:

- 1) Select the event & relief for the type of pleading that is being e-filed
- 2) Enter the case number in which the pleading is to be e-filed
- 3) Designate the party(s) filing the document
- 4) Browse to the PDF pleading that is to be e-filed
- 5) Add attachments, if any, to the pleading being e-filed
- 6) Modify docket text as necessary
- 7) Submit the pleading to ECF
- 8) Receive notification of electronic filing



#### 1. Select the event of pleading to file

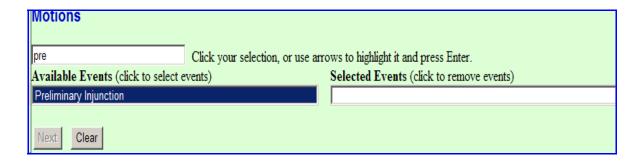
Select <u>Civil</u> from the blue menu bar at the top of the ECF screen. The Civil Event window opens displaying all of the events from which you may choose for your e-filing. This section of the User's Manual describes the process for e-filing a **Motion** in ECF. The process is similar for e-filing other pleadings in ECF.

# Click on <u>Motions</u>, under <u>Motions</u>, Supporting Documents, Responses, Replies & Social Security



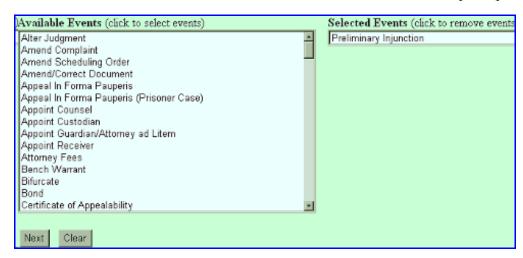
The **Motions** screen displays the available events (reliefs) for selection. Select the proper relief by typing in the empty box under Motions.

For demonstration purposes, type "Pre" in the search box.



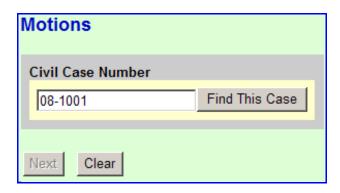
#### **Preliminary Injunction** appears in the available events.

Click on Preliminary Injunction in the "available events" box to select the event. The selected event will move to the "Selected Events' box. Click on [Next].



To select more than one motion relief, click on the available events list to add it to the selected events list.

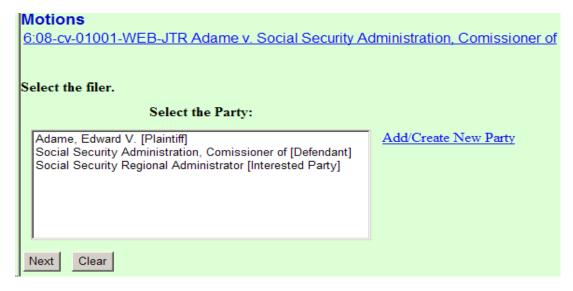
2. Enter the case number in which the document is to be e-filed. You will have to click on "Find This Case" first before the Next button will be available.



• If the case number cannot be found click on [Clear] to re-enter the correct case number.

• When the case number entered is correct, you will be able to click on [Next].

#### 3. Designate the filer party(s) e-filing the document



Highlight the name of the filing party or parties for whom you are e-filing the motion. If you represent all defendants or all plaintiffs, you may select the entire group by holding down the "Ctrl" key while pointing and clicking on each party of the group.

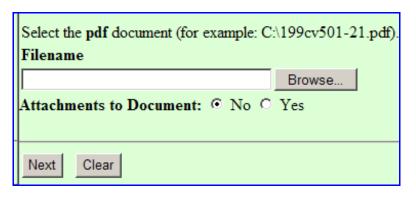
After highlighting the party to the motion, click on the [Next] button.

Note: If your party does not appear, contact the Clerk's Office.

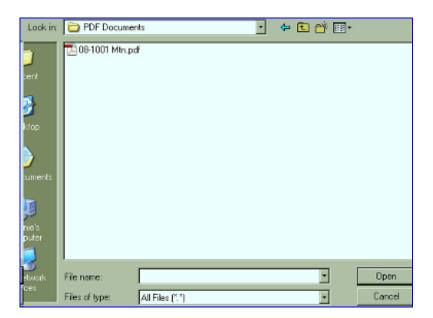
#### 4. Browse to the PDF file name and location for the document to be e-filed.

ECF displays a field to navigate to the PDF pleading you are e-filing.

Note: All docume nts that you intend to e-file in ECF MUST be in PDF format. Otherwise, ECF will not accept the document. Each PDF pleading cannot exceed 5 megabytes in size.

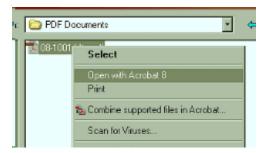


Click on the [Browse] button to activate "File Upload" screen.

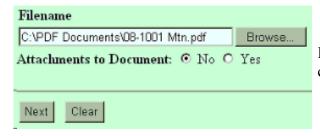


- Navigate to the correct directory and file to select the PDF pleading that has been saved.
- Highlight the pleading to upload to ECF.

**Note:** In order to verify that you have selected the correct pleading, right mouse click on the highlighted file name to open a **quick menu** and left mouse click on **[open]**. Adobe Reader will launch and open the PDF pleading that you selected. You should view it to verify that it is the correct pleading.



Once you have verified the document is correct, close Adobe Acrobat and click on the [Open] button. ECF inserts the PDF file name and location in the "Filename" filed.



If there are no attachments to the motion, click on [Next].

If you have attachments to your motion, you will select [Yes] on the radio button. Click on [Next] and follow the steps in number 5, "Adding attachments to documents being e-filed".

In the event you selected a document that is **not** in PDF format, ECF will display the following error message after you click on the [Next] button.

ERROR: Document is not a well-formed PDF document (no further information is available).

Back

• Click on the [Back] button and ECF will return to the Browse screen. Select and highlight the properly formatted PDF of your pleading and proceed as before.

#### Failure to Select A Document to e-file

If you fail to select a document to e-file with your pleading, ECF will display the error message depicted below.

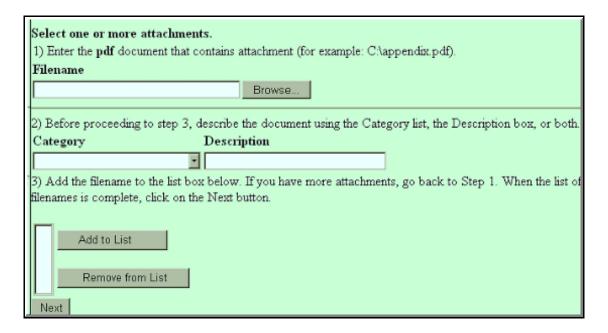


 If you click [OK] from the screen depicted above ECF will return you to the Browse screen. You will not be able to proceed without attaching a PDF document.

Go to number 6, "Modifying Docket Text," to proceed with your e-filing if you are not adding attachments to your motion.

#### 5. Adding attachments to documents being e-filed

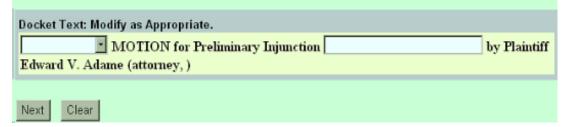
If you acknowledged the need to attach documents to your motion during the previous step, a new **Browse** screen appears. This is a three step process.

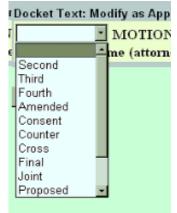


- Click on [Browse] to navigate to the PDF pleading of the attachment. Select your document to e-file and click on [Open].
- To describe the attachment select a category from the drop down list or click in the **Description** box and type a description of the attachment.
- Click on [Add to List].
- Repeat the sequence for each additional attachment.
- After adding all of the desired PDF documents as attachments, click on [Next].

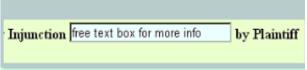
Note: For paper attachments, divide them into 15 to 20 page segments, scan and file them electronically. There is a maximum PDF file size of 5.2 MB.

#### 6. Modify docket text





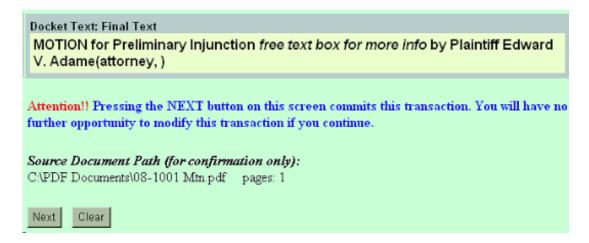
Click on the button shown here to open a modifier drop-down list. Select a modifier if appropriate.



If more information is needed in docket text add additional lanague in the free text box. If no additional text is necessary, leave the field blank.

### 7. Submit the pleading.

• Click on the [Next] button. The "Final Text" window appears with the complete text for the docket report.



- Review the docket text and correct any errors. If you need to correct or **m**dify data click on the back button on your browser toolbar.
- Click on the [Next] button to complete the e-filing process of the pleading.

Note: The screen depicted above contains the following warning.

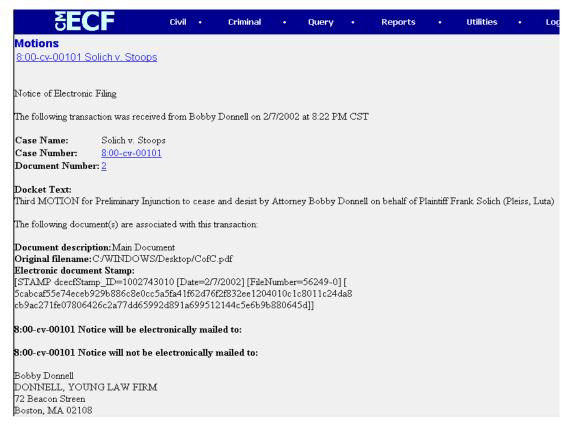
Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.

At any time prior to this step, you can abort the ECF filing or return to previous screens by:

- clicking on any hyperlink on the Blue ECF menu bar to abort the current transaction. ECF will reset to the beginning of the process you just selected.
- clicking on the Web Browser [Back] button until you return to the desired screen.

#### 8. Notice of Electronic Filing

ECF provides a Notice of Electronic filing at the end of the e-filing transaction.



- The screen depicted above provides confirmation that ECF has registered your transaction and the pleading is now an official court document. It also displays the date and time of your transaction and the number that was assigned to your document. You should note this number on the document's PDF file.
- Select [**Print**] on your browser toolbar to print the receipt to PDF or hard copy.

**Note:** The **Notice of Electronic Filing** represents your certificate of filing.

• ECF will electronically transmit the Notice of Electronic Filing to the attorneys of record to the case who have e-mail addresses in the court's system. The ECF filing report also displays the names and addresses of individuals who will <u>not</u> be electronically notified of the filing. It is the <u>filer's</u> responsibility to serve hard copies of the e-filed pleading <u>and</u> the Notice of Electronic Filing to attorneys and parties who are not set up for electronic notification.